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Andrzej Wicher

Freedom *versus* Intolerance — Variations on the Theme of Supernatural Wives and Husbands

I have chosen, for the jubilee volume, my article “Freedom vs. Intolerance — Variations on the Theme of Supernatural Wives and Husbands”. It appeared in the volume entitled “We are all Indians” Violence — Intolerance — Literature, edited by Wojciech Kalaga and Tadeusz Sławek (Katowice 1990).

This was a special time for all of us; today it is called the time of breakthrough, or transformation. The topic of my article, and most other articles contained in this volume, is connected with the problem of freedom and enslavement, which, bearing in mind the atmosphere of that period, was almost inevitable. Thus, the reader will find, in that article of mine, reflections concerning the so called positive and negative freedom, some thoughts about Erich Fromm’s book *Fear of Freedom*. I used there also an old proverb, quoted in the writings of Sir Isaiah Berlin: “to be free is nothing, to become free is the very heaven”, a proverb that sounded very appropriate in the times when we all in Poland were regaining our lost freedom.

The article itself is a heady mixture of threads and motifs taken from classical and modern philosophy, folktales, Biblical traditions and mythology, whereas the typical literary studies, or history of literature, are virtually absent there. This rather unconventional approach is, to some extent, typical of the style of academic discourse characteristic of the English studies as understood and practised in the University of Silesia at that time, that is in the 1980s and 1990s. This style was shaped, among other persons, by the, often indirect, influence of such personalities as Wojciech Kalaga, Tadeusz Sławek, Emanuel Prower, Tadeusz Rachwał, or, last but not least, Ewa Borkowska, who also contributed to the volume in question. Naturally, I am solely responsible for what I wrote in that article, which is a rather faithful reflection of my interests (and perhaps also obsessions) in that very memorable period of time.

The proclaimed subject of “Intolerance”
was intolerance in world history ...
The actual subject of the movie was female sexuality.¹

Michael Rogin

¹ Michael Rogin, “The Great Mother Domesticated: Sexual Difference and Sexual Indifference in D.W. Griffith’s *Intolerance*.” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (1989), 513—514.

1.

Sir Isaiah Berlin in his book on political liberty distinguishes between two kinds of freedom: the negative freedom, i.e. “freedom from,” which, according to him, is designed to answer the question “Over what area am I master?” or “How far does government interfere with me?” and the positive freedom, i.e. “freedom to,” which is supposed to answer the question “Who is master?” or “Who governs me?”² While Berlin admits that the problems of “Who is master?” and “Over what area am I master?” “cannot be kept wholly distinct,”³ he also clearly prefers his “negative freedom” to its “positive” counterpart:

My thesis is that historically the notion of “positive” liberty [...] diverged from that of “negative” liberty [...]; and that this gulf widened as the notion of the self suffered a metaphysical fission into, on the one hand, a “higher,” or a “real,” or an “ideal” self, set up to rule “lower,” “empirical,” “psychological” self or nature, on the other; into “myself at my best” as master over my inferior day-to-day self; into Coleridge’s great I AM over less transcendent incarnations of it in time and space [...]. [T]he “higher” self duly became identified with institutions, churches, nations, races, states, classes, cultures, parties, and with vaguer entities, such as the general will, the common good, the enlightened forces of society, the vanguard of the most progressive class, Manifest Destiny.⁴

Thus, the recognition of the “higher self,” seemingly implicit in the notion of “positive freedom,” turns out to be directly conducive to a morbid alienation. Berlin’s “metaphorical fission” becomes “a weapon of despotism” wielded “in the name of a wider freedom,”⁵ and consequently a particularly pernicious, because camouflaged, means of enslavement.

If then “[t]he fundamental sense of freedom is freedom from chains, from imprisonment, from enslavement by others,” and “the rest is extension of this sense, or else metaphor,”⁶ we are led to conclude that any “positive” concept of freedom, i.e. a concept that specifies a purpose of freedom, is in all probability a deadly pitfall to be avoided at all costs. However, the ultimate logical consequence of a consistent attachment to “negative freedom,” i.e. to freedom for freedom’s sake, can only be, as it seems, a perfect isolation of the individual, a refusal to take anybody’s or anything’s side, which is what Berlin calls: “the retreat to the inner citadel,” and what he describes by means of the following metaphor:

² Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), xliii, and 130.

³ Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, xliii.

⁴ Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, xliv.

⁵ Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, xliv—xlvii.

⁶ Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, lvi.

It is as if I were to say: "I have a wound in my leg. There are two methods of freeing myself from pain. One is to heal the wound. But if the cure is too difficult or uncertain, there is another method. I can get rid of the wound by cutting off my leg. If I train myself to want nothing to which the possession of my leg is indispensable, I shall not feel the lack of it."⁷

As Berlin rightly concludes: "The logical culmination of the process of destroying everything through which I can possibly be wounded is suicide."⁸ It appears then, even though Berlin does not admit it, that both ideals, i.e. those of "negative" and "positive" freedom, are equally pernicious and literally *self*-defeating, if they are followed up in a methodical way. All attempts to achieve a full mastery of the self are apparently doomed to produce either a master and slave relationship or self-destruction through an ascetic self-denial.

A more complex and profoundly paradoxical vision of isolation and "non-attachment" seen as a guarantee of genuine freedom has been provided by Friedrich Nietzsche. In "Beyond Good and Evil" he seems to advocate at one point the ideal of a perfect aloofness and standoffishness, only to stand it on its head a moment later:

Not to cleave to another person, though he be the one you love most — every person is a prison, also a nook and corner. Not to cleave to a fatherland, though it be the most suffering and in need of help — it is already easier to sever your heart from a victorious fatherland. [...] Not to cleave to one's own detachment, to that voluptuous remoteness and strangeness of the bird which flies higher and higher, so as to see more and more beneath it — the danger which threatens the flier.⁹

Thus, we should not cling even to our own formula of breaking loose from various entanglements, lest we should resemble a bird which loses itself, or rather its self, in flying still higher and higher. The foremost objective is here explicitly "the conservation of oneself," without which no real freedom is conceivable: "one must know how to *conserve oneself*: the sternest test of independence."¹⁰ Nietzsche's warning against "the danger which threatens the flier" (*die Gefahr des Fliegenden*) and Berlin's allegory of the wounded and self-wounding man point out together to the virtual futility and absurdity of any quest for absolute freedom. Unfortunately, neither of the two philosophers seem to tell us precisely how to avoid the Scylla of a society of masters and slaves and the Charybdis of an ascetic or poetic nihilism and other

⁷ Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, 135.

⁸ Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, 140.

⁹ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (London—New York: Penguin Books, 1990), 70.

¹⁰ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 70.

forms of unworldliness. Nevertheless, Nietzsche's striking formula of "not being attached even to the not being attached"¹¹ gives a general idea of how such a way of avoidance should look, namely that it should presuppose a large measure of inconsistency and paradox (*nicht an seiner eignen Loslösung hängenbleiben*).

2.

Erich Fromm in *The Fear of Freedom* takes up the biblical myth of Adam and Eve as: "a particularly telling representation of the fundamental relation between man and freedom."¹² In his opinion man's first disobedience constituted an act of negative freedom, the fatality of which consisted in the fact that it was not accompanied by an equally strong element of positive freedom:

The act of disobedience as an act of freedom is the beginning of reason. The myth speaks of other consequences of the first act of freedom. The original harmony between man and nature is broken. God proclaims war between man and women, and war between nature and man. Man has become separate from nature, he has taken the first step towards becoming human by becoming an "individual." He has committed the first act of freedom. The myth emphasizes the suffering resulting from this act. To transcend nature, to be alienated from nature and from another human being, finds man naked, ashamed. He is alone and free, yet powerless and afraid. The newly won freedom appears as a curse; he is free *from* the sweet bondage of paradise, but he is not free *to* govern himself, to realize his individuality.¹³

Fromm presupposes thus a certain ideal state in which there would exist a perfect balance between "freedom from" and "freedom to," although he admits that this ideal is hardly realizable:

If the process of the development of mankind had been harmonious, if it had followed a certain plan, then both sides of the development — the growing strength and the growing individuation — would have been exactly balanced. As it is, the history of mankind is one of conflict and strife. Each step in the direction of growing individuation threatened people with new insecurities. Primary bonds once severed cannot be mended; once paradise is lost, man cannot return to it.¹⁴

¹¹ Translation mine.

¹² Erich Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom* (London and Henley: Ark Paperbacks, 1984), 27.

¹³ Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 28.

¹⁴ Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 29.

The question arises now whether this “balanced,” “harmonious” and “planned” development, whatever form it could take, would not be intolerable for the same reasons for which the first parents became tired of their harmonious existence in Paradise, of which Fromm writes in the following way:

Man and woman live in the Garden of Eden in complete harmony with each other and with nature. There is peace and no necessity to work; there is no choice, no freedom, no thinking either.¹⁵

This on the whole rather off-putting image is contrasted by our author with a more dynamic vision of a “new paradise”:

There is only one possible, productive solution for the relationship of individualized man with the world: his active solidarity with all men and his spontaneous activity, love and work, which unite him again with the world, not by primary but as a free and independent individual.¹⁶

It is indeed hard to see how this “re-union with the world could be reconciled with individualistic thinking, or how the “active solidarity with all men” could be achieved without levelling down the behaviour of “all men” to some sort of unified and coordinated standards, which is exactly the thing Berlin warned against when speaking about the “positive freedom” and its dangers. Consequently, Fromm’s “new paradise” does not seem to be radically different from the “old” one. The much advocated “positive realization of freedom and individuality” may very easily turn out to be just another form of what Fromm calls “a panicky flight from freedom into new ties.”¹⁷ It seems that every theoretical model that postulates a harmonious reconciliation of the positive and negative freedoms is bound to overemphasize the former to the detriment of the latter, simply because in the very notion of “harmonious reconciliation” we find the Berlinian “metaphorical fission” which will inevitably evoke a “higher self” bent on disciplining and subduing the unruly and “unharmonious” lower element. Let us, however, follow further Laura Hibbard’s hint that “truth is hidden in the trappings of the tale.”¹⁸

¹⁵ Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 27.

¹⁶ Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 29.

¹⁷ Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 30.

¹⁸ Laura A. Hibbard, *Medieval Romance in England: A Study of the Sources and Analogues of the Non-Cyclic Metrical Romances* (New York: The Viking Press, 1929), 5.

3.

Outside the Edenic myth it seems that the classical wondertales (*Märchen*) provide us with excellent models of “the fundamental relation between man and freedom.” The very beginning of a standard fairy tale: “once upon a time” represents already a liberating breakaway from the flow of the historical time in which we are imprisoned, and the opening of a new temporal perspective. Uttering the formula “once upon a time,” we assume in fact the posture of a creator who launches the beginning of a new time, taking into brackets, as it were, the reality of our everyday experience. This gesture captures the whole meaning and attraction of the “negative freedom,” the freedom of “breaking new ground,” and “turning over a new leaf,” or “breaking free” in general, which may remind us of the old German proverb: “*Frey sein ist nichts, frey werden ist der Himmel!*” (to be free is nothing, to become free is the very heaven).¹⁹ But at the same time we feel compelled, after saying “once upon a time,” to add immediately “there was” or “there were,” i.e. to “call into being,” or to institute a new reality which may very soon become as unbearable as the old one, and require another liberating breakaway, another act of breaking free. Thus, the opening formula of the wondertale is at the same time a liberating and a founding gesture expressing thereby the ontological unity of the positive and negative freedom. But it also follows that, if the wondertale is to give voice to man’s primordial longing for freedom, this liberating and founding gesture has to be repeated again and again, so that no static network of relations is allowed to entrench itself. Max Lüthi, the man who entered into the spirit of the wondertale, described this state of affairs by means of the two dialectically interconnected notions of “*Allverbundenheit*” (all-connectedness) and isolation:

Visible isolation and invisible universal interconnectedness (*Allverbundenheit*) — these features can be described as fundamental for the artistic form of the wondertale. Isolated characters are elements of a harmonious, invisibly masterminded, interplay. The above mentioned two features condition each other. Only rootless characters, who are free from external relations, and from preoccupation with one’s inner self, can establish at any time no matter what kind of relations, and break them off just as easily.²⁰

The avoidance of a semantic closure by way of all sorts of kaleidoscopic changes appears to be then the main structural trait of the wondertale. Even though the play of changes has to end at some stage, it does not mean that the Frommian “perfect balance” has been reached. The interplay of the contradictory forces of “all-connectedness” and “isolation” can only be suspended, but it cannot be resolved,

¹⁹ Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*, lix.

²⁰ Max Lüthi, *Das europäische Volksmärchen: Form und Wesen* (Tübingen: Francke Verlag, 1947), 49; translation mine.

at least as long as we remain faithful to the original creative formula of “once upon a time.”

We may take as an example the class of tales which A. Aarne and S. Thompson call “the tales of supernatural wives,” the best known, though by no means the most typical, representative of which is Type 410 (Sleeping Beauty).²¹ Here is the opening of such a tale, also a bit untypical because of the concreteness of the geographical setting:

Up in the Black Mountains in Caermarthenshire lies the lake known as Lyn y Van Vach. To the margin of the lake the shepherd of Mydvai once led his lambs, and lay there whilst they sought pasture. Suddenly, from the dark waters of the lake, he saw three maidens rise. Shaking the bright drops from their hair and gliding to the shore, they wandered about amongst his flock. They had more than mortal beauty, and he was filled with love for her that came nearest to him.²²

Tales with similar openings usually contain the popular motif or the Swan Maiden: “The hero in his travels comes to a body of water and sees girls bathing. On the shore he finds their swan coverings which show him that the girls are really transformed swans. He seizes one of the swan coats and will not return it to the maiden unless she agrees to marry him.”²³

The existential situation of the Swan Maiden before her meeting with the hero deserves our attention. She possesses a certain zone of freedom over which she has perfect control. She can appear either as a swan or as a girl and she receives orders from nobody. And yet her existence may rightly be called empty and futile, not in spite of, but rather because of the freedom she is enjoying. It is in fact an almost perfect combination of positive and negative freedom, which results in a far-reaching harmony between her and the pristine nature in which she is immersed. All this amounts to saying that she is enchanted, though in a less obvious way than the Sleeping Beauty, and has to be awoken, or rather torn from the unchanging and monotonous rhythm of her circular being. The hero’s procedure of “disenchanting” her consists characteristically in taking away the hub around which her life revolves — the swan coat which anchors her existence in the world of nature, but at the same time betokens her versatility and potentiality for a radical change of her ways. It is enough to transform what formerly was a static linchpin into an object of bargaining, or a play, to free the Swan Maiden from the spell

²¹ Antti Arne and Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1928), 62—67.

²² Michael Foss, ed., *Folk Tales of the British Isles* (London: Book Club Associates, 1977), 127.

²³ Stith Thompson, *The Folktale* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1977), 88.

and make her become the hero's wife. The whole process of theft and marriage blackmail may of course also be seen as a symbolical representation of rape or sexual intercourse in general, but the most essential thing here is the intimate link between liberation and violence,²⁴ as well as the thin difference between static freedom and enslavement.

This is not, however, the end of the story, though some truncated versions of the Swan Maiden tales, e.g. "The Sleeping Beauty," may well end here. In the more developed Type 400 (The man on a quest for his lost wife)²⁵ it often happens that the hero hides the supernatural heroine's swan coat once again, this time with the intention never to return it, and thus to secure a complete control of her behaviour. In the parallel tales of Type 425 (The search for the lost husband), known also as Cupid and Psyche tales,²⁶ the heroine frequently burns the skin left after the disenchantment of her animal husband, in order to prevent the possibility of his further transformations. In any case a catastrophe happens, the supernatural wife finds her hidden swan coat and abandons the hero, or the supernatural husband leaves his reckless wife in a fit of anger. The estrangement brought about by the act of the "second hiding" can normally be healed only through a hard and prolonged penance.²⁷ We can easily see that this motif represents the beginning of intolerance conceived of as something distinctly different from mere violence. Intolerance in this context may be defined as a forcible attempt to eliminate a risk, an attempt which always proves counter-productive and brings about a rift in the structure of being instead of the expected unity and safety. While the "first hiding" of the swan coat by the hero implied the participation of both sides in a game that could be rewarding for each of the participants, the "second hiding" runs counter to the wondertale standards of the hero's or heroine's behaviour, is devoid of the element of play, and can be seen as a pure confirmation of the perpetrator's ego. Within the wondertale every tendency towards exclusive possession, which belongs to the order of the "positive freedom," is soon thwarted and compromised in the interest of the principle of all-connectedness. Hence the existential rift, mentioned above, has an ambiguous nature, it is a disaster but also an opportunity for regeneration. The wondertale characters are not subject to Fromm's "fear of freedom," they can use every situation to their advantage, are not seized by doubts and uncertainty, and they never become anybody's slaves or exponents of any dogmatic ideology, following intuitively the ultimately most profitable course of action.²⁸

²⁴ The sexual implications of the crises happening in wondertales are thoroughly discussed in Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* (New York: Vintage Books, 1977).

²⁵ Arne and Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale*, 62.

²⁶ Arne and Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale*, 67.

²⁷ Thompson, *The Folktale*, 98.

²⁸ Lüthi, *Das europäische Volksmärchen*, 54.

4.

Now we can come back to the Garden of Eden, a story written in a distinctly different spirit than the tales of supernatural husbands and wives, but, rather surprisingly, sharing with them many structural features. First of all, we should notice some striking illogicalities in the Old Testament text. We read, for example, that God says: "I will make him and help meet for him" (Gen. 2.18),²⁹ and that later it is said that: "Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him" (Gen. 2.20). It is indeed strange that he should need any help at all as he seems to have no other job on his hands than the rather leisurely task of naming animals which God himself "brings unto him to see what he would call them" (Gen. 2.19). Another well-known curiosity of the text is the question of creating Eve out of Adam's rib as if there had been no simpler methods of doing it.

As regards the latter motif, we may notice immediately that it bears a strong resemblance to the disenchantment of a supernatural wife in some wondertales, especially if we assume that Eve and the serpent, who appears in the story directly after Eve's "creation," may have been in fact one and the same person — a hypothesis supported by the fact that "Eve" in Old Hebrew probably meant "serpent."³⁰ The supernatural wives enchanted into snakes, instead of swans, are by no means a rare phenomenon in the folklore. It often happens in such tales that the hero "finds a bewitched princess in a castle and succeeds in disenchanting her, either by enduring silence three frightful nights in the castle or else by sleeping by the princess three nights without looking at or disturbing her."³¹ Sleep, which in the tales of supernatural wives is often a symptom of enchantment, here appears as a means of disenchantment, a heroic sleep reminiscent of Adam's "pregnant" sleep after which he discovers Eve at his side. In a highly interesting Russian folktale of the discussed type, i.e. in "The Snake Princess" (*Tsarevna zmeya*),³² the process of disenchantment involves the hero's having to endure for seven years the enchanted princess who, in the form of a snake, is coiled round his neck with the tip of her tail inside her mouth. We recognize here very easily the "uroboros:" the circular snake biting its tail, and an ancient symbol of wholeness, perfection, "of that which is self-begetting, self-consuming, self-containing, and self-fulfilling,"³³ and above all a symbol of the

²⁹ The quotations from the Bible follow the Authorized King James Version.

³⁰ F.L. Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 487.

³¹ Thompson, *The Folktale*, 91.

³² Alexander N. Afanasyev, ed., *Narodniye russkiye skazki* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literatura, 1977), 217–220.

³³ Isaiah Smithson, "Iris Murdoch's *A Severed Head*: The Evolution of Human Consciousness," in: Robert Con Davis, ed., *Contemporary Literary Criticism* (London and New York: Longman, 1986), 226.

union of all pairs of opposites, including that of femininity and masculinity. The state of the “uroboric union”³⁴ is exactly what the wondertale calls enchantment, and what has to be broken or unspelled, as in the episode of the Swan Maiden. In “The Snake Princess” the process of disenchantment does not consist in breaking the circle of enchantment by taking away its central element, as in the Swan Maiden tales, but by a show of extraordinary patience and endurance, after which the snake princess agrees to become the hero’s wife, renouncing her “paradisaal autarchy”³⁵ and androgynous form. Joseph Campbell apparently reverses this relationship when he concludes from Adam’s words: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; and she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (Gen. 2.23) that: “Before the separation of Eve, Adam was both male and female.”³⁶ In the light of the tales of supernatural wives we would have to correct this statement a little and say that Adam had to take up an appearance of androgyny, just as the wondertale heroes have to enter into a subtle contact with the enchanted girl’s body — by picking up her swan coat or by “sleeping by her side without disturbing her,” so as to enable his beloved to abandon her supernatural, animal, or “uroboric” aspect and thus become prepared for marriage, or for contact with the external world in general. It seems that in ancient, largely matriarchal cultures, the female androgyny was treated as a matter of course and had a high place in the archetype of the Great Mother,³⁷ whereas men or boys were specially given certain spurious female features in the process of initiation and circumcision.³⁸ Hence perhaps in wondertales the disenchantment, or rather the “disandrogynization,” of female supernatural beings is on the whole a much more complicated affair than that of male ones.

Consequently, we may assume that the bizarre idea of fashioning Eve out of Adam’s rib can be read as a transformation of the story in which the snake princess changes suddenly into a beautiful girl having been coiled, as a serpent, round the hero’s chest while he was asleep. The fact that she may later appear again as a serpent is not particularly strange since in wondertales the supernatural wives frequently undergo at first only a partial disenchantment and can revert to their animal shape also after their marriage with the hero.³⁹ What begs for explanation is the presence of an apparently superfluous figure called God, who presides over the process of disenchantment which should have belonged to the two interested parties. We find that the Old Testament myth is clearly biased in favour of the male characters that figure in it, it is they, i.e. Adam and God, who appear as carriers of androgyny, through their power to create, to give birth, and to invent names, while Eve’s vital

³⁴ Smithson, “Iris Murdoch’s *A Severed Head*, 226.

³⁵ Smithson, “Iris Murdoch’s *A Severed Head*, 226.

³⁶ Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1969), 104.

³⁷ Smithson, “Iris Murdoch’s *A Severed Head*, 230.

³⁸ Campbell, *The Masks of God*, 130.

³⁹ Thompson, *The Folktale*, 88.

connection with the serpent is blurred and mystified. Adam, on his part, has to give up some of his heroic attributes to his fatherly protector and supervisor. The story sides openly with men and fathers against women and children. It is this patriarchal tendency that must have lain behind the motif of Eve's emergence from Adam's body.

In order to find folktale analogues to the father figure in the Edenic story, we shall have to resort to a slightly different type of wondertales which, however, may also contain the Swan Maiden motif and is obviously related to the tales of supernatural wives, namely to Type 313 (The girl as a helper in the hero's flight).⁴⁰ In those tales the hero is usually "brought by the swan maiden to the house of her father, who turns out to be a cruel ogre. [...] The hero is put to severe trials. Sometimes he is forbidden to open a box containing a magic castle. But most often he must perform impossible tasks on pain of death. Some of the most frequent of these tasks are the planting of a vineyard overnight, the cleaning of a stable which has been neglected for years, the cutting down of a whole forest, the catching of a magic horse, the sorting of large numbers of grains, or the making of a huge pond. Whatever the tasks may be, the ogre's daughter performs them for the hero and plans to escape with him."⁴¹ If we assume that a similar story may be lying behind the Edenic myth, several things will become clearer than they used to be. We shall understand why Adam needed help in the Paradise. His stay there, far from being a period of carefree idleness, takes on a more interesting aspect if seen as walking the tightrope of "impossible tasks" each of which may end in his death at the hands of the bloodthirsty ogre, the old master of the garden and the hero's unreconciled father-in-law. The "impossible tasks" are all concerned with imposing a strict order on the world of nature. Adam's task of naming animals is of a similar nature, even though it is not associated with either great risk or difficulty. We may, however, suspect that there was a close link between naming the animals and bringing them under control so as to use them for the completion of some difficult task. The old superstition may be recalled here according to which the knowledge of a name gave power over its bearer.⁴²

In the Scottish folktale, "Nicht Nought Nothing," which is a good example of Type 313 (The girl as a helper in the hero's flight), the hero is being assisted in his tasks by a cruel ogre's daughter, who on one occasion steps forward to "call all the beasts of the field and all the fowls of the air,"⁴³ which is in itself a strange echo of the biblical phrase: "And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field" (Gen. 2.20). The animals are summoned in order to make it possible for the hero to "clean a stable seven miles long, and seven miles

⁴⁰ Arne and Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale*, 51–52.

⁴¹ Thompson, *The Folktale*, 89.

⁴² This superstition plays a pivotal role in Type 500 (The name of the helper) a representative of which is the English wondertale "Tom, Tit, Tot," in: Foss, *Folk Tales of the British Isles*, 26.

⁴³ Foss, *Folk Tales of the British Isles*, 26.

broad that has not been cleaned for seven years.”⁴⁴ In wondertales of this type it is patently clear that the hero would have achieved nothing without the ogre’s daughter, in whom we recognize the Lady of Wild Animals, and an avatar of the Great Goddess.⁴⁵ The same attribute is significantly given in the Book of Genesis to the serpent, who is described as “more subtil than any beast of the field” (Gen. 3.1).

The most important, however, of all the tasks performed with the help of the ogre’s daughter, the swan maiden, or the snake princess consists in finding and stealing a forbidden object which has strong magical qualities and is often instrumental in enabling the young couple’s flight from the ogre’s enchanted garden. In the Russian tale, “The Snake Princess” the girl has to instruct the hero in the best way of obtaining a magical object, a barrel hidden in a forbidden chamber.⁴⁶ The task facing the hero’s female helper in “Nicht Nought Nothing” is much more formidable. She has to cut off her own fingers and toes so as to prepare steps enabling the hero to climb the tree on top of which there is a magical nest.⁴⁷ At this point our story, the story of obtaining a Forbidden Thing with the help of a woman, betrays a strong affinity with a number of Greek myths, such as the story of Jason, Medea, and the Golden Fleece, the myth of Theseus and Ariadne, the myth of Perseus, Medusa, and Andromache, or the tale of Heracles in the garden of the Hesperides. All of them seem to be ultimately based on the pattern of Type 313, although, like the Edenic myth, they tend to disguise the identity of the girl helper and the serpent — the guardian of the forbidden tree or of the precious object, treating them as two distinct figures. Sometimes this disguise is rather thin if we remember that, for example, the name Medea, just like Medusa, means “a guardian,”⁴⁸ and if we recall the functional identity of the Hesperides, the nymphs guarding a tree with golden apples, and Ladon, the dragon who guards the same tree. In fact in all those tales we have to do with another version of the supernatural wife’s disenchantment, this time consisting in the hero’s bold endeavour to destroy the animal aspect of his uncommon wife, in a way remotely analogical to the hero’s pouncing upon the swan coat left by the enchanted girl. It follows, however, that the discussed scene has first of all the character of a self-sacrifice on the part of the girl, or at least it may easily have such a character. She has to betray her father, who insists on eating up the hero, even though the latter carries out the assigned tasks, or simply goes back on his promise and refuses to allow for the hero’s marriage with his daughter, if the hero’s “impossible tasks” have clearly the nature of the suitor’s tasks. Her betrayal consists in helping the hero in his tasks, and enabling him to get hold of the Forbidden Thing, sometimes by helping him to kill or by disarming herself the

⁴⁴ Foss, *Folk Tales of the British Isles*, 26.

⁴⁵ Campbell, *The Masks of God*, 46.

⁴⁶ Afanasyev, *Narodniye russkiye skazki*, 220.

⁴⁷ Foss, *Folk Tales of the British Isles*, 26.

⁴⁸ Ernest Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language* (Amsterdam, London, and New York: Elsevier Publishing Company, 1966).

serpent-like guardian of the Forbidden Place.⁴⁹ Since, however, it is she herself who really is the guardian, it is quite appropriate that she may be found fulfilling, as in the discussed Scottish tale, an act of self-sacrifice including self-mutilation. The fact that in “Nicht Nought Nothing” the girl after cutting off her digits during her Sacrifice on the Tree — which may be interpreted as an extreme self-mutilating, self-castrating, and self-“disandrogynizing” gesture — recovers her former healthy shape very easily and without any explanation may be attributed to her partaking of the nature of the serpent, which, as Campbell asserts, represents always “the principle of life bound to the cycle of renewal, sloughing death.”⁵⁰

Seen against the backdrop of all those mythical and folktale analogues, the Edenic myth still preserves quite a strong individual character which would be unwise to overlook or dismiss. Indeed, in none of the parallel stories mentioned or discussed so far could we find the motif of the hero and his girl helper being banished from the enchanted garden by the girl’s father or a similar figure. The appearance of this motif in the Book of Genesis means a reversal of the usual mythical perspective in which the garden is a place from which one has to flee in order to save one’s life — in the Old Testament it is a place one should rather cling to lest one become subject to death. Also in none of the parallel tales the breach of the father’s prohibition is considered a proper cause for a feeling of guilt or compunction, unlike the violation of the prohibitions imposed on the hero or heroine by their supernatural wives or husbands. The uniqueness of the story of Adam and Eve consists exactly in that it is told from the point of view of the father, the old master of the garden, and not that of the adolescent hero or heroine. In other words, the problem of the original “uroboric union,” i.e. of the undifferentiated union of opposites, is resolved in the Edenic myth in the spirit of the “positive freedom” in which God appears as an impersonation of the “higher self,” whereas other narratives of this sort tend to stress the importance of the “negative freedom” and of “breaking free” from secluded gardens. Hence the massive degradation of the character of Eve in the Edenic legend. She is not only presented as a miserably unsuccessful rebel — the flight effected owing to her efforts is shown as banishment, but also her motives are denigrated — she is said to act for the sake of self-elevation (“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil,” Gen. 3.5), whereas the genuine snake-princess is already a goddess and thinks of a sacrifice that would make her more human rather than more divine (The Old Russian snake-princess is shown as a lovely girl standing on a high place and surrounded by a ring of fire, while Eve is shown standing under a tree in a garden surrounded by water).⁵¹ The gulf between the biblical and the broadly conceived mythical tradition has been partly bridged by the Roman Catholic interpretation of the story of the Fall as a “*felix culpa*,” i.e. a “happy fault”

⁴⁹ Perhaps the best illustration of this dilemma is provided by the myth of Medea and Jason.

⁵⁰ Campbell, *The Masks of God*, 259.

⁵¹ Afanasyev, *Narodniye russkiye skazki*, 217.

or “fortunate sin,”⁵² which strives to arrive at a compromise between the patriarchal and the “adolescent” point of view. Fromm is certainly right when he emphasizes the unpreparedness of the first parents for life in the conditions of “negative freedom,”⁵³ the remedy, however, does not lie, as he suggests, in providing them with elements of “positive freedom.” On the contrary, their feelings of guilt and shame indicate a well developed “metaphorical fission” between “higher” and “lower” self.

It is certainly not the feeling of purpose that Adam and Eve lack, but rather the feeling of the attainability of the purpose. In the tales of supernatural husbands and wives it often happens that after the hero or heroine have offended their supernatural spouses they receive a pair of iron shoes which they must wear out before they can find again their fairy wife or husband.⁵⁴ It is noteworthy that Adam and Eve, who appear as almost one person in the scene of the banishment, cover up their nakedness immediately after breaking the taboo against eating from the Forbidden Tree. Instead of a supernatural spouse, they offend, however, their common supernatural father who belongs to an infinitely higher order of existence, and the “aprons made of fig leaves” which Adam and Eve prepare for themselves are symbols of a permanent shame or “fission” which cannot be simply “worn out”. The motif of the iron shoes is strictly connected with what we referred to as “second hiding” (see p. 308), they are a reprisal for the hero or heroine’s attempt to hide or destroy the supernatural spouse’s animal covering, a hyper-covering, as it were, representing the reverse side of the attempt at a complete uncovering. Also in this respect then the Edenic myth reverses the folktale tradition, Adam and Eve’s coverings are not imposed upon them by some external agent, but are self-imposed in recognition of a “higher” good which at the same time is a token of guilt and of the unattainability of the highest good, i.e. a union with the godhead. In this way they are caught in a sort of “civilizational trap” in which neither the return to Paradise, nor the forgetting of the loss of Paradise are possible.

5.

Our comparison of mythical traditions can naturally be carried on. The tale about “The girl as a helper in the hero’s flight” does not end at the moment of the young couple’s leaving the ogre’s mansion. It may continue in its full form through the following episodes: “The Flight,” which often has the form of an “obstacle flight” in which the ogre is being stopped in his pursuit of the runaway couple by the magic objects they throw behind themselves, such as a forest, a comb, a stone, a flint, or a band, which turn into natural obstacles, such as a forest, a mountain, a fire, or a river; “The Forgotten Fiancée,” in which “the hero forgets his bride when,

⁵² Campbell, *The Masks of God*, 110.

⁵³ Fromm, *The Fear of Freedom*, 4.

⁵⁴ Thompson, *The Folktale*, 91, 98.

against her warning, he kisses his mother (or his dog) or tastes food on his visit home; 'Waking from Magic Forgetfulness,' in which the forgotten bride draws attention to herself by transformations and miracles, such as talking to animals, and often, in order to remind her forgetful husband of herself and of her past services, she "buys a place for three nights in the bridal bed from her husband's new bride: not till the third night does he wake"; and "The Old Bride Chosen," in which the hero remembers his forgotten fiancée and decides to marry her, instead of the new bride.⁵⁵

Each of those episodes seems to be fragmentarily reflected, following the above order, in the history of both the Old and New Testament, although of course such analogies have to be more or less imperfect. For example, the story of the "obstacle flight" is in the main quite faithfully rendered in the Book of Exodus, as has been already noticed by Campbell.⁵⁶ Moses, whose name probably means "child,"⁵⁷ is a foster-son of the kind daughter of an ogrelike, cruel pharaoh, and his role is comparable to that of the hero's female helper, the hero being here the whole nation of Israel, who can forestall the ogre's, i.e. the pharaoh's pursuit because she knows his ways and is a powerful magician. It has to be, however, borne in mind that Moses cannot be simply taken for a representative of rebellious discourse of "children," as opposed to the authoritative one of "fathers." The "obstacle flight" in the Book of Exodus is very unusual in that it not only is a flight from a fatherlike figure, but also a flight with the father, i.e. with Yahweh, the national god of Israel, and to the father, i.e. to the Promised Land of Israel's forefathers. From the point of view of the wonder-tale logic the presence of Yahweh is entirely superfluous, just like the presence of an enemy in one's own camp, and Yahweh's behaviour towards Israel is little better for its cruelty and vengefulness than that of a thinly disguised mortal foe. Let it be noticed that sometimes in connection with the so-called "transformation flight," a variant of the "obstacle flight," the pursuing ogre may assume an innocent form, or even pose as a helper, before his tricks are foiled by the hero's bride, even though basically the property of turning into various persons, animals, or things belongs to the fleeing couple.⁵⁸ We can observe then once again the same obsession with a fatherly figure of a highly ambiguous nature which typified the story of Paradise. Another important link between the Exodus and the Edenic myth consists in the traces of the cult of the magic serpent of which Moses seems to have been the high priest together with the priestly college of the Levites, whose name, to be connected with "Leviathan," is derived from the Hebraic root meaning "serpent."⁵⁹ Later the salutary, health-bringing serpent fashioned by Moses is found as the brazen serpent

⁵⁵ Arne and Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale*, 52.

⁵⁶ Campbell, *The Masks of God*, 133.

⁵⁷ Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*.

⁵⁸ An example of such a situation may be found in T.D. Kurdovanidze, ed., *Gruzinskiye narodnije skazki*, vol. 1, no. 35 (Moscow: Izdatelstwo Nauka, 1988), 114–128.

⁵⁹ Klein, *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*.

called Nehushtan and is finally destroyed together with its cult by Hezekiah king of Judah to please Yahweh.⁶⁰

The return of the forgotten serpent is of course to be associated with the coming of Christ, who, according to St. John, says of himself that “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (St. John 3, 14—15). Almost the whole of Christ’s career may easily be seen as one great attempt at making Himself recognized by drawing attention to Himself or to the role of His earlier avatars, such as Moses or Elijah, in the history of Israel, without, however, disclosing directly His real name and identity, which is totally in keeping with wondertale standards, just as the protracted futility of His efforts: “He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not” (St. John 1, 10). Characteristic in this context is also His intimacy with animals and willingness to present Himself as their Lord and Protector and the one who “calls his sheep by name”: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life” (St. John 10, 27—28). Equally telling is St. John the Baptist’s cryptic reference to Christ as bridegroom: “He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled” (St. John 3, 29). But the full significance of the discussed analogy can appear only in connection with the Sacrifice on the Tree, in which Christ’s nature of a new Adam, and first of all a New Eve appears in full. Here is the well-known scene of the risen Saviour’s encounter with Mary Magdalen, who, according to St. John, was the first to see him after Resurrection and thus the first bearer of the Gospel:

And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God, and your God. (St. John 20, 14—17).

The above scene may readily remind one of the ending of the tale of “Cupid and Psyche” by the Roman writer, Apuleius, in which the exhausted and confused Psyche is finally reunited with Cupid, her supernatural husband and god of love,

⁶⁰ The Second Book of Kings 13.4.

who, however, also has to, albeit for a short while, leave her in order to pay a visit to his father, Zeus.⁶¹ It is only appropriate that the final recognition, in fact one of many recognition scenes concluding the Gospels, should take place in a garden. Mary Magdalen, herself a former dangerous witch from the town of Magdala on the shore of the Sea of Galilee from whom Christ had once to eject seven demons (St. Luke 8, 2), takes Him wrongly for a gardener, but this is a very felicitous mistake because we surely meet here again the guardian of the Forbidden Tree in the garden of Eden. Her question: where have you laid the body? is also very well placed, if by the “body” we should understand the sloughed off skin of the eternal serpent appearing as the several times emphasized by the Evangelist “linen clothes” left in the sepulchre (St. John 20, 5—7). Christ’s injunction: “Touch me not” makes it clear, however, that we are not having to do here with a “normal” story of a supernatural spouse, the ontological rift caused by the Edenic catastrophe is too serious to be healed on the personal level, i.e. between the hero and his bride. Even if Israel no longer seems to be a problem, there still remains, in conformity with the biblical tradition, a characteristic “second bottom” — the problem of the Father and loyalty to the Father. Neither Mary Magdalen, nor Christ’s “beloved disciple” can be simply elevated, like Psyche in Apuleius’s story, to the position of gods. The concluding embrace cannot take place: “He that loveth his life [or his ‘psyche’ — as in the Greek original] shall lose it [or ‘her’]; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal” (St. John 12, 25). We recognize here the same movement of thought which lies behind the Nietzschean programme of the “the conservation of oneself” through a radical independence even from an excessive attachment to the independence itself (see above), with the important difference that St. John’s Gospel introduces a perspective of eternity which postpones every fulfilment, and which Nietzsche would have probably criticized as “*die Abkehr vom Willen zum Dasein*,” or as turning away from the will to existence.⁶²

Passing from the Old to the New Law we pass from one mythological tradition to another, i.e. from a basically endogamous tradition emphasizing the bonds of blood and race, and intolerant towards mixing with strangers, to a fundamentally exogamous one, suspicious of received customs, and postulating an ideal union with the Divinity, though only after breaking free from the existing bonds and divisions, often in the name of some long forgotten or neglected, but still essential values, or in the name of persons representing those values.⁶³

⁶¹ Ernst Günther Schmidt, ed., *Apuleius: Amor und Psyche* (Leipzig: Verlag Philipp Reclam jun., 1981).

⁶² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Der Wille zur Macht. Versuch einer Umwertung aller Werte* (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1939), 13. Translation mine.

⁶³ The questions of exogamy and endogamy play an important role in Eleazar Mielewski’s concept of the wondertale as a reflection of the marriage ritual, though, unfortunately, he does not seem to notice the essentially exogamous nature of the wondertale. Eleazar Mielewski, *Poetyka mitu* [*Poetics of myth*], trans. Józef Dancygier (Warsaw: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1981), 330—331.

Within the former tradition it is even possible to command: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" (Exodus 22, 18), which is understandable, though of course not excusable, in so far as a witch is an epitome of a "mixed being" whose symbol is "uroboros," the androgynous serpent of Paradise. It is in this tradition that the gesture of the second, or full, covering, which we observed in tales of supernatural husbands and wives, finds its almost total realization.

Inside the second "exogamous" tradition we encounter faith in the power and possibilities of various forms of androgyny, also metaphorically understood, and in the gesture of the first, incomplete and playful, hiding. At its most extreme this tradition can produce a statement like this one: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (St. Luke 14, 26). This utterance may be interpreted as a generalized reformulation of the wondertale taboo against kissing one's mother (see above) in the wake of which the "magic forgetfulness" of the supernatural bride ensues. It is also a revolutionary call for a practical application of the wondertale principle of "isolation and all-connectedness," "revolutionary" also in the sense of imitating the serpentine twists and revolutions and ultimately heading for a complete "uroboric union" of all pairs of opposites: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3, 28).

Instead of injunctions against witches and worshippers of foreign gods, we find in the Gospels frequent encounters and sympathetic accounts of cosmopolitan tax-collectors, and of possessed or adulterous women. Even though the principle of monogamy is strictly upheld (St. Mark 10, 6—9), a preferential treatment is given to a foreign, Samaritan woman who has had five husbands and now has a lover (St. John 4, 4—42). Jesus's conversation with her is charged with symbolical meaning, and it lets us conclude that we have to do here with an encounter of two magic water snakes meeting by the waterside, in this case Jacob's well. They both can offer, in accordance with the wondertale custom, the water of life of which they are both guardians and dispensers. They are capable of many transformations, and can enter into many uncommon relationships while preserving their integrity. The water can be obtained from them in return for love, though of course the Samaritan woman is but a local animal, just like her later avatar, Chaucer's Wife of Bath,⁶⁴ she cannot offer the "water springing up into everlasting life" (St. John 4, 14), and her love is not perfect.

A remotely similar pair of serpents, one male and the other female, was met by the Greek mythical soothsayer, Tiresias on Mount Kyllene in Arcadia, which was the place where the god Hermes was born, whose name is connected with "hermetic" knowledge, with "hermeneutics," and with Hermaphroditus, the impersonation of

⁶⁴ It is very appropriate that the Wife of Bath's tale within the framework of *The Canterbury Tales* is based on the pattern of tales of supernatural wives, where the Wife appears herself as an enchanted creature.

androgyny, and who, in his capacity of the gods' messenger, wielded the "caduceus," a staff with two entwined snakes and two wings at the top. Tiresias, on killing the female serpent, changes from an old man into a young woman, becomes a renowned prostitute, and, after some time, meets another pair of love making snakes in the same place, which enables him/her, this time on killing the male, to turn back into a man.⁶⁵ Tiresias is indeed an appropriate person to discover the mystery of King Oedipus's incestuous marriage.⁶⁶ He and Oedipus represent two opposite and extreme poles of exogamy and endogamy, respectively; i.e. prostitution and incest.

6.

The difference between the "endogamous" and "exogamous" discourse, though vital, should not be regarded as absolute. It roughly corresponds to the notions of "positive" and "negative" freedom, as defined by Berlin, which, as we have seen (see above, the beginning of the essay), cannot be consistently isolated or kept apart from each other. Also the New Testament does not offer us anything but a complex interplay of the discourse of the "Father" with that of the "Son," even though the latter may seem to triumph momentarily over the former. Since, however, even the ultimate victory of the Son over the forces of convention and hierarchy is immediately interpreted as a "return to the Father," or a reunification with the Father (St. John 14, 8—12), the unity of the Biblical world is preserved, though at the cost of obscuring and eclipsing the figure of the Father. Even so eminently "exogamous" a genre as the wondertale, which allows for the most widely improbable connections and condemns all closely knit family units, contains, nevertheless, a warning against rash exogamy, a warning that takes often the form of a wicked mother-in-law.⁶⁷

The relationship between the "positive" and "negative" freedom may be likened to that between the inseparable twins of the Greek mythology, the Dioscuri, symbolically represented by a pair of serpents entwined round an amphora.⁶⁸ The younger of the Dioscuri, Castor, whose name means a "beaver," is not, unlike his brother, Pollux, of an entirely divine origin, he is a "mixed being," with a supernatural mother and an earthly father, and, again unlike his brother, he is not granted the privilege of immortality. It is Castor who represents the "negative" principle of mobility, and he is also his brother's successor, as one of the large collection of the apparently less worthy relatives who supplant the former master, or elder relative. One should be reminded here of Cain and Abel, or of King Arthur and his unfaith-

⁶⁵ Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967), 342.

⁶⁶ Graves, *The Greek Myths*, 342.

⁶⁷ Mielecinski, *Poetyka mitu*, 330.

⁶⁸ Graves, *The Greek Myths*, 234.

ful nephew, Mordred.⁶⁹ The Dioscuri are rightly shown as inseparable, even though their relationship is neither perfectly symmetrical, nor complementary. The symmetry of this relationship is spoiled by a flaw, an incompatibility that resides in its very centre, a spoke in a wheel which hampers the smooth working of the metaphorical or allegorical mechanism of the production and reproduction of meaning. The uncritical acceptance of this mechanism leads inevitably to totalitarian consequences and to the levelling up of differences, and such consequences ensue no matter whether one goes in the direction of symmetry, intentionally smoothing away the differences, or in that of complementarity, by exaggerating the differences and making them apparently impossible to overcome. One possible way out, or perhaps the only possible way out, is to assume and be constantly aware of a certain fundamental incompatibility, or error, within any metaphorical construct, since it seems a fond illusion to believe that any meaning is possible outside metaphor. Hence the incompatibility and the inseparability of the Dioscuri, the divine twins. We can also consider the well-known copperplate by William Blake, “Laocoön as Jahveh with his two sons — Satan and Adam,” where all three personages are struggling dramatically with two twin serpents, named Good and Evil. The serpents are here practically identical and hardly distinguishable, but what seems to count in the first place, is that their victory and ultimate coalescence, though apparently inevitable, is for ever postponed by the action of the artist’s art. And, as Blake wrote himself on the discussed picture: “The Old and New Testaments are the Great Code of Art.” The same spirit of the postponement of fulfilment governs the wondertale principle of “isolation” vs. “all-connectedness.” To paraphrase Hibbard’s motto: “Truth is hidden in the trappings of the tale” (see above), we can say: truth is a “trapping,” or an incomplete seizure, of the tale and in the tale.

Source

Wojciech Kalaga and Tadeusz Sławek, eds., *“We Are All Indians.” Violence/Intolerance/Literature*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego 1990.

⁶⁹ The motif of rivalry between the twins, which presumably lies behind the myth of the Dioscuri, is expounded by Graves, *The Greek Myths*, 232–233.